That the Bill be passed.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): Sir, will my subject be taken up?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Yes. Actually, yesterday the discussion on situation arising out of the misuse of funds provided by the Central Government under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, raised by Shri V. Narayanasamy, was not concluded. So, that will be taken up first. But, I request all the speakers on this subject to be very brief because the next Short Duration Discussion has to be taken up. Now, before I call Mr. Gill, I want the Minister to lay a statement on the Table.

Statements by Ministers—*Contd.*

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ग्रामीण विकास मंत्री (श्री रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह) : महोदय, मैं विभाग संबंधित ग्रामीण विकास संबंधी संसदीय स्थायी समिति के अट्ठाईसवें प्रतिवेदन में अंतर्विष्ट सिफारिशों के कार्यान्वयन की स्थिति के संबंध में एक वक्तव्य सभा पटल पर रखता हूं।

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Situation Arising out of Misuse of Funds provided by the Central Government under National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme

DR. M.S. GILL (Punjab): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman. I want to thank Mr. Narayanasamy for somehow managing to, not on a Friday, but on a Thursday, raise a discussion on perhaps the most important project of this UPA Government which is the rural employment programme which Mrs. Gandhi, the UPA Chairperson, the Prime Minister and many others, I suppose, have pushed hard to try, and, somehow, get it down to rural India, to ground India and to poor India. It has been running. I think, for a number of years now and something like, may be, Rs. 30,000 crores or more or whatever have been spent on it; I am guessing this. I also see that a decision has been taken to implement it from 200 districts to 600 districts, which means really the whole India; maybe a few districts will be left out; I can't say. Therefore, there is a determination to move forward and to expand it to a section of people which needs tremendous help. Arjun Sengupta's Report, has, I think, highlighted the whole situation even more dramatically. Eighty-six per cent or whatever of people with twenty rupees or less. And, that is the area which is linked to this scheme also and endeavour to try and do something for them. And, therefore, I think, Mr. Narayanasamy's success in bringing this forward has to be commended because you need to discuss and assess where have you got. I have been, over the last couple of years, hearing a very able Minister of Rural Development, our friend from Bihar, and whenever he takes over, I don't think anybody is really able to beat him up on his assertion that the programme is doing tremendously well and there are great achievements in it. I have certainly heard it that way. But, while that may be true, partly or wholly, an assessment, a critical assessment, by this country, by this Parliament, is necessary. And, therefore, I look at what has come up today. Now, I heard Mr. Narayanasamy and